



# An Emergency Management Plan

For relocating persons  
served in private and  
DMR-group residential and  
day programs

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# Message from the Commissioner



*In 2001, the Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) embarked on a mission to develop an emergency management plan for individuals served by the department. Five years later, we find ourselves one of the national leaders in addressing the needs of people with disabilities during an emergency. Our initiatives have been recognized by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) and other state and local emergency management programs across the country.*

*The original Emergency Plan focused on the development of a database that holdser information about people who receive DMR residential, day or support services. This database enables the department to identify exact locations of our consumers at any given time throughout the day and any special supports they may require. After the initial phase of the plan, our Emergency Management Team worked diligently to develop a comprehensive Emergency Relocation Plan that addresses the relocation of our consumers in the event of a hurricane, nuclear disaster or any other statewide emergency.*

*The DMR Emergency Management Team is an integral part of the statewide emergency system. Working in conjunction with DEMHS, DMR employees participate in statewide emergency drills, man the State Office of Emergency Management Command Center in Hartford and operate several DMR command centers throughout the state.*

*We are committed to safeguarding the well being of DMR consumers, especially during an emergency situation. Our work over the years has helped prepare us to assist your loved ones during a crisis. We will take whatever actions necessary before, during, and after an emergency to protect the people we serve.*

*Peter H. O'Meara, Commissioner*

***State of Connecticut, Department of Mental Retardation***

## Background

The Connecticut Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) provides services and supports to over 19,000 individuals and their families through a network of public and private providers across Connecticut. The DMR is organized into three geographic Regions. The Department operates three regional offices, various campus programs, and an Operations Center in Central Office, which coordinates all contracted services.

The events of September 11, 2001 focused public attention on existing emergency mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery practices. Federal, state, and municipal governments across the country were asked to review, and if necessary, develop and/or revise their response to a catastrophic man-made or natural event affecting large numbers of citizens. In Connecticut, the governor asked each state agency to develop comprehensive plans to address such catastrophic scenarios.





# Special Operations Plan for Emergency Relocation

In February of 2002 the DMR released its *Special Operations Plan for Emergency Relocation*. This document directs private and DMR operated group residential and group day program settings to prepare to relocate the individuals they serve during an emergency.

The Special Operations Plan requires an Emergency Relocation Plan be maintained at each residential and day program site in a special notebook, the "Red Book," easily accessible to staff. Contents of the "Red Book" must include:

- **An Emergency Relocation Summary:**

This is a quick reference to needed relocation information. The summary includes specific relocation sites to be used during a Level I\*, II\*\*, and III\*\*\* emergency situation requiring evacuation and relocation of the individuals attending the program site. Relocation site names, addresses, phone numbers, contact names, and directions must be part of the summary.

- \* A **Level I** is defined as a local emergency situation, affecting a single residential or day program site. Such an emergency could include a major fire with toxic fumes, significant damage to utilities affecting a local area, a toxic spill or release of hazardous chemicals or biological agents that may affect water systems or are expected to be airborne over short distances. **Relocation sites may be within a 10-mile radius of the affected program site.**
- \* A **Level II** Emergency is defined as an emergency situation caused by an event that occurs in a community or limited geographic area, comprised of contingent towns, which require relocation outside the affected area. Such an emergency could include a fire, prolonged power outage, local flooding, or toxic spills. **Relocation sites must be outside a 10-mile radius of the program site.**
- \* A **Level III** Emergency is defined as a catastrophic emergency that affects a wide area and that requires immediate relocation of the populace of large geographic areas. Public confusion and panic are anticipated. Such an emergency could include major leakage of radioactive material due to an incident at a nuclear power plant, or other significant incidents that result in state or national direction to relocate a wide area or region. **Evacuation of large numbers of citizens to relocation sites well beyond the affected area is required.**




# Special Operations Plan for Emergency Relocation (cont'd.)

## • Emergency Individual Fact Sheets:

Fact Sheets include critical information about the individual, should they need to be evacuated. Information includes: the individual's name, address, their physician's name and address, their pharmacy name and address, and critical dietary, medical and other necessary information. In addition to the fact sheet, a Medication Administration Record (e.g., Kardex) must be transported with the individual at the time of an emergency relocation.

## • Individual Identification Badges:

Identification Badges are to be attached to individuals' clothing. The badges are a size-reduced copy of the Emergency Individual Fact Sheet with the person's photograph. These badges contain information necessary to insure the person's safety should they be in the care of others who do not know them.

 Connecticut State Department of Mental Retardation  
**EMERGENCY INDIVIDUAL FACT SHEET**  
DMR Command Center Phone Number  
(860) 418-8700

COMPLETION/UPDATE DATE: 1/8/02 PHOTO DATE: 12/31/01

INDIVIDUAL: John Doe DMR NUMBER: 000008765 DOB: 5/21/47

RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: 17 Main Street Newington, CT 06788

PROVIDER: Alameda, Inc.  
PROGRAM & ADDRESS: Market Street GSE 49 Market Street Middletown, CT 06754 PHONE: (860) 777-7777  
PHONE: (860) 777-7777

PHYSICIAN: Dr. Jordan PHONE: (860) 777-7777  
PHARMACY: Pelton's PHONE: (860) 777-7777

MEDICAID NUMBER: 999999999999

FAMILY CONTACT: Mrs. James Doe PHONE: (860) 777-7777

MEDICAL GUARDIAN: Mrs. James Doe PHONE: (860) 777-7777

BLOOD TYPE (if known): O positive

MEDICAL DIAGNOSES: profound mental retardation; seizure disorder; atrophy of limbs; lactose intolerance; allergic to penicillin; significant hearing loss

Attention Relocation Site: Contact Pharmacy if Medication Administration Record is NOT available

**CRITICAL REQUIREMENT**  
**ANY REQUIREMENT THAT CAN CAUSE SERIOUS HARM OR DEATH IF NOT ADHERED TO**

CRITICAL REQUIREMENT	?	DESCRIPTION
Medications?	YES	Facility medication administration records (e.g., Kardex) are to be transported with fact sheets when an emergency occurs.
Meds taken at Day Program?	YES	
Medical?	YES	repositioning every 2 hours
Allergies?	YES	milk & all milk products; penicillin
Dietary?	YES	no milk & milk products; ground diet (pea size maximum)
Eating?	YES	hand over hand assistance required; food refusal by pushing out tongue; chokes on food greater than the size of a pea
Ambulation/Mobility?	YES	custom wheelchair
Adaptive Equipment?	YES	Hoyer lift; shower chair
Communication?	YES	John can hear you if you speak directly to him, within one foot from significant hearing loss
Supervision?	YES	food or medication refusal; may choke on food; severe seizures when manifested - thrashes causing potential injury; make sure no milk & products are available; bites others unexpectedly
Behavior Management?	YES	Behavior Management Plan for Biting Others- keep non-support persons arms length

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Commissioner Peter H. O'Meara





# Emergency Management Database



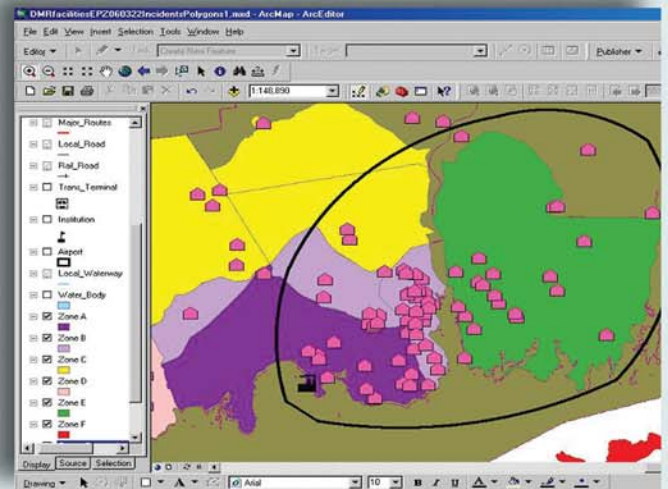
DMR has created a comprehensive database of essential emergency related information regarding clients of the department and service providers. The database is a means for the department to access vital information in the event of a widespread emergency, or significant disaster that could threaten the health and safety of the people we serve. The information in the database is updated monthly. Particular database information is shared on a monthly basis with DEMHS who in turn shares the information with municipal emergency management directors for emergency preparedness and response efforts.

## DMR Geographic Information System Overview

DMR has a Geographic Information System (GIS) that can link conventional database information to spatial information. Data can be queried or mapped according to spatial characteristics. The DMR GIS is compatible with other state and federal GIS data. DMR has access to many data layers that include: roads, political boundaries, emergency zones, and flood zones. These layers, coupled with DMR's own layer of service location data, have proved to be a powerful tool for emergency preparedness and emergency management. The DMR GIS has been used to identify DMR service sites within specific emergency zones surrounding Connecticut's Millstone Nuclear Plant. The GIS has been used in Emergency Preparedness drills to map plumes of radioactive material to determine the affected DMR service sites. During a heat wave in the summer of 2006, the GIS was used to map the portion of a Connecticut town that lost power. The GIS information served to identify DMR individuals affected by the outage.

To improve the accuracy of GIS information for all service sites, DMR has been gathering Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates for all service locations.

GIS use is increasing in Connecticut government and is the preferred medium for some types of spatial data exchange. DMR is taking an active role in interagency initiatives to establish a DEMHS GIS database



# Emergency Management Organization

The DMR has established an Emergency Management Organizational Structure in order to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. The organizational model addresses overall statewide and regional command structures and the roles of personnel.

- **An Emergency Management Director**, designated by the Commissioner, oversees statewide activities associated with emergency operations.
- **A Central Office Emergency Management Coordinator** reports to the Emergency Management Director, oversees Central Office emergency operations, and leads and organizes statewide emergency management activities in collaboration with Regional Emergency Management Coordinator(s).
- **A Regional Emergency Management Coordinator(s)**, designated by Regional Directors, oversee regional emergency operations, and organize regional emergency management activities.
- *Central Office and Regional Emergency Management Coordinators designate personnel to respond to any kind of emergency event.*

Each DMR Region and the Central Office have designated primary and secondary Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs). EOCs are the physical locations from which EOC Team Members coordinate, monitor, and direct information and resources during an emergency to support the emergency response activities. When the safety of clients of the Department are threatened due to the imminent or actual occurrence of a major emergency, the department will activate and manage any or all DMR EOCs.

Should an emergency arise of sufficient magnitude necessitating regional and/or statewide, multi-agency coordination of emergency responses, the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Management & Homeland Security (DEMHS) will activate the DEMHS EOC. The DMR commissioner and his liaison team will join other state officials at the DEMHS EOC to coordinate emergency response efforts. The DMR Commissioner will direct DMR EOC emergency response efforts from this location. Refer to the map on the following page to view the DMR EOC locations.

*“Commissioner O’Meara and his staff work closely with our Department to ensure that the evacuation, shelter, communication and other needs of persons with disabilities are addressed in the case of a hurricane, nuclear disaster, or any other regional or statewide emergency. In addition, DMR has developed its own emergency response plan for all DMR consumers, which includes an emergency relocation plan. The DMR has been and continues to be a strong partner with us in emergency preparedness, planning and response.”*

*Commissioner James Thomas  
Department of Emergency Management and  
Homeland Security (DEMHS) for the State of  
Connecticut.*



# Emergency Management Preparedness Drills



**DMR Central Office EOC and Regional EOCs  
"Full Activation"**

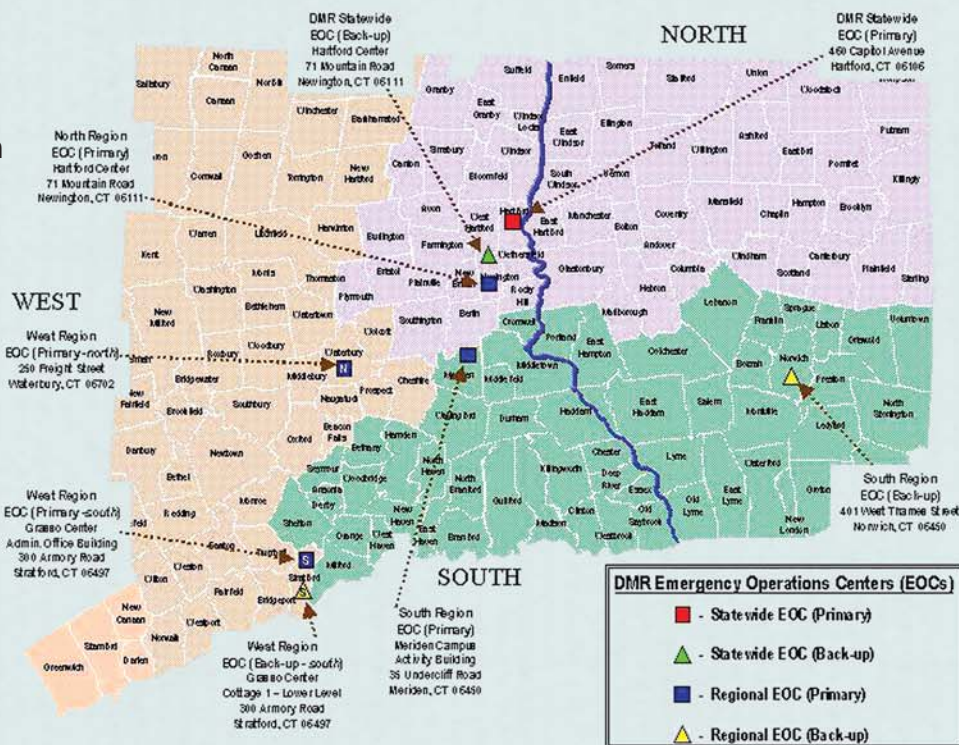
DMR and the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) established a collaborative relationship in 2002. Since then, DMR has participated in over a dozen DEMHS emergency drills associated with nuclear safety, homeland security, and natural disasters. DMR has tested the department's Special Operations Plan for Emergency Relocation within the context of these emergency management exercises.

In addition, DMR is collaborating with DEMHS, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to establish a "host community" for special populations, which

would operate at the DMR Southbury Training School campus in Southbury, Connecticut. The host community will be a reception, triage and decontamination site in the event of a radiological event. To establish the host community, DMR has received four grants from the Nuclear Safety Emergency Preparedness (NSEP) fund for physical plant renovations, equipment and training, and communication infrastructure enhancement. The fourth of these grants was awarded in June 2006.

In the spring of 2005, DMR participated with state, federal, and international agencies in the biological terrorism exercise TOPOFF 3. This international bio-terrorism exercise included the participation of the State of New Jersey, the United Kingdom and Canada. During this event all DMR EOCs were staffed and operational for a thirty-six hour period. Additionally, a DMR Emergency Management Liaison Team was continually present at the DEMHS EOC throughout the event.

DMR staff are members of DEMHS area emergency management committees. These DEMHS committees are comprised of state, municipal, and utilities representatives tasked with developing regional evacuation and sheltering plans.



## Other Efforts

DMR, working with IBM, is nearing completion of statewide DMR business continuity plans. These plans are designed for use in two disaster situations:

**Scenario One:** When an event impacts a DMR Regional or Central Office or for any reason the location cannot be used as a place of business, or

**Scenario Two:** When the Connecticut Department of Information Technology (DOIT) has experienced a catastrophic loss of its systems and services and the DMR Regional or Central Office is without State computer systems and/or internet access.

Another facet of business continuity planning is formulating the department's response to a pandemic flu outbreak. This facet is currently under development.

DMR has participated in many emergency management workshops sponsored by federal, state and local agencies. Topics at these events addressed:

- Federal, state, local, and private sector responsibilities regarding preparing for and responding to a pandemic emergency.
- Hurricane preparedness planning for the state. Review of Connecticut's "Points of Distribution" scheme for providing citizens with food, water and ice in the aftermath of a hurricane. The history and characteristics of New England hurricanes. Hurricane information centers, debris removal issues, drinking water safety. Also discussed, the role of the American Red Cross and features of hurricane shelters.
- Hurricane Katrina and what happened to people with disabilities before, during and after the storm, and the lessons learned.
- Overview of Homeland Security efforts in the state and Connecticut's Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Discussion of missions, scenarios, tools and data, activities and accomplishments.

Key DMR staff have passed the Shelter Managers Training course offered by the American Red Cross in partnership with DEMHS. This training included an in-depth study of basic shelter operations, shelter management guidelines, and the American Red Cross Sheltering Matrix.

Several DMR staff have completed emergency preparedness and response learning courses required by the federal government associated with the *National Incident Management System*. A goal of the Department is for all staff involved in emergency preparedness and response to complete these courses.

DMR is working with the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services to develop a service provider emergency preparedness self-assessment instrument.